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LETTER DATED 8 JANUARY 1993 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I regret to have to inform the Security Council that the situation in Angola has deteriorated severely since the beginning of the year.

There have been outbreaks of heavy fighting in at least ten provincial capitals and other centres of population. Each side has accused the other of responsibility for initiating these hostilities. In almost all cases the outcome of the fighting has been that UNITA premises have been destroyed and its personnel captured and in some cases killed. Meanwhile, the Government has been unable to reestablish its administration in many rural areas and some two-thirds of the municipalities in Angola remain in UNITA's hands.

UNAVEM personnel who are deployed in more than 60 different locations in Angola, have been exposed to extreme danger as a result of these hostilities and in one case had to spend three days consecutively in slit trenches within their compound. It has been necessary to evacuate the UNAVEM teams from two provincial capitals.

My Special Representative has worked tirelessly to establish contacts between the two sides in order to restore the cease-fire and to relaunch the political dialogue which had begun quite promisingly at Namibe on 26 November. Military commanders on both sides have frequently spoken with each other via UNAVEM's communications and in some cases these contacts have had a beneficial effect. They cannot, however, be a substitute for face-to-face meetings and I am glad to be able to report that Miss Anstee has succeeded in obtaining the agreement of both sides in principle to a meeting between General Joao de Matos, Chief of General Staff of the Angolan Armed Forces, and General Demósthenes Chilingutila of UNITA. It has not however been possible to obtain agreement on the location of such a meeting, a number of proposals having been made by Miss Anstee but rejected by one side or the other.

Her latest proposal is for a meeting at Menongue, a city which has not so far been affected by the fighting, where, with the necessary assurances from both sides, UNAVEM would be able to assist in making the necessary logistic and security arrangements for a meeting.

Unless the fighting can be brought under control and dialogue restored between the two sides, it is difficult to see how the peace process in Angola can be saved. In these grave circumstances, I believe that it would be useful if the Security Council could publicly endorse my Special Representative's efforts and make a strong appeal to the two sides to agree to a meeting in Menongue at the earliest possible opportunity.

I should be grateful if you would bring this letter to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Boutros BOUTROS-GHALI